



VIA ECFS

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: *Promoting the Availability of Diverse and Independent Sources of Video Programming, MB Docket No. 16-41*

Dear Ms. Dortch:

March 28, 2016

My name is Broderick Byers, founder of a mobile information resource and commerce network called iSwop Networks. I am a 25 year veteran of the cable industry and a founder of the cable industry's minority advocacy group, the National Association for Multi-Ethnicity in Communications (NAMIC). My role in the cable industry was that of a consumer marketing executive in our country's urban markets. I know firsthand the mindless programming that the cable industry promoted to minority communities.

Cable programming "gatekeepers" have the absolute power to decide what they think minorities should and should not be viewing. Their programming decisions have traditionally led to the distribution of "entertainment-based programming. Our community has long desired self-help, motivational and instructional programming content. Despite numerous requests to carry more uplifting content, Big Cable has always responded that minority communities are NOT interested in and will not support this kind of programming. But, who are they to decide? If given a chance and marketed correctly, this type of programming will find an appreciative audience.

In my 20+ years in the cable industry, I have attempted to launch several cable networks. One was The Employment & Career Channel, which received awards from PBS. This network provided job training, career readiness, and employment information. Another was Second Chance TV, a network specifically designed to support incarcerated citizens, post released citizens and their families. Although there was significant community support for these networks, the gatekeepers saw no value in this critical community programming. As a result, neither venture was successful as it should have been. I urge the FCC to create direct to consumer models that eliminate gatekeepers. I have supported initiatives such as "Unlock the Box" because they allow niche streaming programmers access to television viewers in a seamless experience reflective of our technological capacity. I only wish this proposal was in place when I was launching The Employment & Career Channel and Second Chance TV.

Consumers should have the right to access the content of their choice on the device of their choice. The gatekeeper system must no longer restrict consumer access to good content. Access to programming content in the public interest must remain the mission of the FCC. The Employment & Career Channel and Second Chance TV are not alone in providing community benefits. There are thousands of other ideas that deserve their opportunity to compete for the attention of television viewers. I hope that your agency will finally hold the cable industry accountable to the over 100 million customers that deserve better. Please stand strong and UNLOCK THE BOX and create a fair competitive video programming marketplace!!!

Best Regards,

Broderick
Broderick C. Byers
CEO